



TEACHER IS A TEACHER NOT A PANACEA

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ABSTRACT

For a longer time than what we can recall, teachers have been placed a significant status in designing a student, in terms of moral, ethics, and personality. In terms of a student's profession, a teacher can make a significant mark in enabling the student create his/her own opportunities. Hence, the role assigned to the teacher is highly valued but is also featured with a great deal of responsibility that comes along with it. In the contemporary times, the challenges associated in this profession are considerably greater than the opportunities that they provide for. In an arena of this kind, a panacea like consideration of a teacher is spelled out to be inappropriate and hence the present paper has proposed that psychometric examination on teachers will prove to be one of the most efficient tool in context of providing spaces for identification and improvement of the areas that are practically possible for the teacher to improve. This paper objectifies five major aims to visualise the various dimensions that are involved in psychometric testing on teachers. It first identified the various advantages and limitations associated with administration of psychometric tests on teachers. Thereafter it attempts to recognize the human attributes which are pertinent for teaching profession, which can be identified by psychometric tests. The paper further aims to identify psychometric tools that will be most efficient for assessing teachers. Lastly, it aimed at identification of strategies that will make psychometric results beneficial for teachers and other school stake holders.

KEYWORDS: Panacea, Psychometric Testing, Teachers, Psychometric Tools, Human Attributes, Strategies.

Teachers are an indispensable asset in transaction of curriculum and designing the characters and personalities of many students. Being a major determinant in the spectrum of education, which is highly vibrant and dynamic in itself, it is essential to envisage on an understanding of a teacher as someone who also grows and learns across his/her experience. It might appear more than obvious to state that s/he has to be an exemplary. But it is primarily significant to consider a teacher as an individual who is placed into an ever evolving sphere of knowledge. The evolution of knowledge systems will certainly call for modifications and growth for all the factors that comprise of those systems, so do teachers. With times changes, culture, aspirations, ambitions, technology, lifestyle and applicability of knowledge. In this context it becomes essential to analyse and provide for growth and developmental arenas for teachers who also are human beings involved in this system of change. Expecting fortitude and excellence from a teacher is not just at any dimension of analysis. It is hence to be understood that teachers are very much like normal human beings, in any other profession who are as well, a combination of static genetic make-up along with dynamic environmental factors that influence the personality, intelligence and spirit of being in one's profession. Therefore, acknowledgement of individual differences should be restored in all professions. However, it is by no means that the present paper is trying to say that a teacher should not be an exemplary or a role model for the students. One should always try to set an ideal example for the young ones to follow, but the present paper is attempting to propose that there is a practical in viability in expecting perfection from a teacher like profession at all times and all situations. There are multiple possibilities and situational challenges that may hinder one's ability to execute one's potential and disables him/her to deal appropriately with the situation. It is with this premise that the present paper proposes that „a teacher is a teacher, not panacea', though it has been further proposed that psychometric evaluation and proper articulation can be effective in maximization of the benefits that a teacher can bring about not only in the classrooms but to the society at large.

Involvement of teachers in cases like murders, rapes, kidnapping, etc. is to be highly condemned. One of the most tragic and traumatic accidents that took place at Ryan international school (Gurugram), which is the „Pradyumn Murder case..Pradyumn, a seven year old boy was murdered allegedly by the bus conductor. Mysterious and loaded with suspicion as the case had been handed over to the CBI, it was a nationwide call for ensuring safety and security of children within and outside the school premises for which the school was to be held responsible. Outside the school premises in areas like the school bus, etc and inside the school like the playground, classrooms, corridors, etc. should be threat proof not only for the students but for all the entities that work for the school. After the above discussed murder case, the demand for safety reached different tangent altogether, which was much higher than mere installation of CCTV and surveillance through guards and cameras. This incident shocked the very foundation of school systems which led the Central Secondary Board Of Education (CBSE) to ask its 19,500 affiliated schools to conduct behavioural testing on teachers. The CBSE operates under the administrative control of the Union human resource development ministry and eventually also issued a circular calling for a security and safety audit of the premises and personnel by police within

two months. "They must get the police verification and psychometric evaluation done for all the staff employed. Such verification and evaluation for non-teaching staff such as bus drivers, attendants, peon and other support staff may be done very carefully and in a detailed manner," said the circular issued by deputy secretary Jaiprakash Chaturvedi. According to reports, Schools affiliated to the CBSE are spread over 26 countries and employ around 10 lakh people. Such schools in India include around 1,100 Kendriya Vidyalayas, 600 JawaharNavodayaVidyalayas, 2,700 schools run or aided by state governments and 14,900 private schools. One of the major implication of this circular to expose the teachers to psychometric testing, which in the present paper is proposed to be helpful in upgrading the awareness of teachers for their own appraisal, not only in the profession but also in personal aspects. Therefore, it is reported that psychometric testing should be administered for school teachers, with a vision beyond suspicion elimination, and rather for their professional and personal skill enhancement. As, previously stated, teacher is a teacher not a panacea, but the effect that a teacher can potentially have on society, its citizens and the future of a nation is a highly significant one. Hence, psychometric testing will provide the quality opportunity for them to know and work on their lacunas and improvise on them.

Psychometric testing refers to an attempt to the understanding an individual's behaviour, cognition, perception and attitudes by the use of some structured or unstructured stimuli. These tests measure a standardised sample of behaviour and describe them on a numerical scale. The scale thus puts the qualifying parameters for the candidate. Test conduction and administration is analysed by trained psychologists who are known as psychometricians, who very carefully interpret and generate the results in accordance with a norms table or scores which had been used as a norm depending upon the age, profession or gender in a given geographical region. Psychometric testing is not only standardised by is also highly reliable and valid. The various techniques of psychometry had enabled psychometricians to predict and comment on the unobserved constructs in behaviour, personality and mental make-up of an individual. Therefore, they are used as one of the major recruitment tools for the assessment of the success an individual is likely to achieve in a particular profession. Psychometric tests are designed to measure, evaluate and comment on an individual's suitability for a role based on the required personality characteristics and aptitude i.e. cognitive abilities. Psychometric tests have been developed for the assessment of almost all psychological attributes, like intelligence, attitude, aptitude, creativity, personality etc, as explained in the following section:

1. **Self-Report Measures:** Developed by Gordon Allport, these techniques attempt to ask individuals about them. Using structured stimuli, answers in this type of test are taken on face value and rating scales are used for assessment and evaluation. Such measures include tests like Minnesota multiphasic personality inventory, Eysenck's Personality Questionnaire, etc.
2. **Projective Techniques:** They are premised on Freudian approach, and attempt to assess individual in terms of unconscious framework, by the use of unstructured stimuli on which the unconscious of an individual is likely to

get projected. Such techniques include: Thematic Apperception Test, Rorschach inkblot test, picture frustration test, etc.

- 3. Behavioural Ratings:** In this method, an individual's behaviour is studied under a variety of circumstances to be able to account for the holistic understanding of his/her personality. Observations may entail data from interviews, ratings, nominations and situation stress tests, etc.

There are numerous customized tests and batteries that are prepared for assessment of a specific skill set. With the advent of technology and its portability, online administration and testing of psychological attributes have also been developed. But a developing nation like India, encounters three major challenges in the manifestation of the above premise.

Firstly, the very discipline of psychology is considerably a recent educational and research development in India. For this reason, there has been a gap in application of western theories that have been adopted in the Indian system without indigenization. Moreover, psychometric tests in themselves are highly expensive, it requires a great deal of skill, practice and hence expertise for proper interpretation and dissemination of psychometric results.

Secondly, administration of online testing in India is another major challenge in terms of physical and functional infrastructure, which is featured with hindrances like low network connectivity, inadequate guidelines, inefficient funding for and unavailability of computer systems, expensive equipment, etc.

Lastly, there is major mental block for psychological testing, which is associated with societal labeling. It is considered to be a matter to shame to be undergoing a psychometric tool, due to the stigma that is attached to the profession of a psychologist, counsellor (clinical), psychiatrist and psychometricians.

Moving ahead with time is a great implication of educational achievement of any sort. For this it is a pertinent expectation to understand a teacher as an individual who can be enhanced by administration and proper dissemination of psychometric results.

Present study:

Teachers are one of the major determinants of the success in education systems. Contemporary times are featured with globalisation and tremendous advancements in terms of educational technology. It is therefore essential that teachers are not visualised as a panacea to every possible challenge and rather they should

be provided with spaces to grow and generate avenues for their development. Although, psychometric testing may entail a number of limitations as far as assessment on teachers is concerned. In spite, assessment and feedback to teachers based on various psychological attributes is suggested to be an efficient tool to make them aware of their lacunas and thereafter facilitating their improvement and enhancement of skills.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To identify the possible advantages and limitations of psychometric testing on teachers.
2. To identify specific human attributes (of teachers) that can be helpfully evaluated via psychometric testing.
3. To identify psychometric techniques/tools that will be most efficient for assessing teachers.
4. To assess whether psychometric testing for teachers is helpful or not.
5. To identify strategies that will make psychometric results beneficial for teachers and educationists.

METHODOLOGY:

Centralizing the aims of the research, a questionnaire was prepared which comprised of four descriptive questions and a close ended question. By purposive sampling method, 18 psychometricians were identified, 11 of whom were RCI license holders. They were individually briefed about the purpose of the study and were ensured of confidentiality of their individual identical details and responses. After the establishment of a functional rapport, they were given the questionnaire and were requested to be as exhaustive as they could be, with their responses. Each participant took not more than 20 minutes to fill in their responses on the questionnaire. Due to paucity of time and prior engagements, a few participants also responded via Google forms. Thereafter they were thanked.

The first four questions of the questionnaire were exposed to content analysis for interpretation of data and the last question was analyzed using technique that considers both the presence of yes/no lexical terms and thereafter tabulated (see table 2)

RESULTS:

Table 1

Objective 1: Psychometric Testing On Teachers

Advantages	Limitations / Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can help in identification of skills that are required to be a good teacher • Useful for pointing areas of improvement. • Can help escape social desirability if administered properly. • Can be fed back for personal efficiency of professionals as teachers. • Can help to identify qualities like empathy. • Assessment of social and emotional quotient of teachers. • Can generate self-awareness in teachers. • Helpful in identification of unconscious composition of teachers, if suitable for the profession or not. • Help in identification of unhealthy habits which may adversely affect their role of a teacher, like anger, frustration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They may be excessively expensive • Proper conduction may be highly time consuming • Requires skilled and expert professionals for administration and generation of results. • They may lead to psychological conflict if not disseminated or perceived in a healthy light (of improvement). • They might be misused by management for replacement or creation of vacancy. • Creates unnecessary competitive ambience among teachers. • If not fed back properly, they may lead to anxiety or depressive symptoms. • Follow up should be undertaken in course of 2-3 years. • Unavailability of culture fair tests might lead to coloured results • Any kind of personal or professional biases might cause invalid or irrelevant results.

Table 2: Identification of Possible Advantages And Limitations/Disadvantaged Of Psychometric Testing On Teachers.

Objective 2: Whether psychometric testing of teachers is helpful or not

Yes	No
15	3

(Opinion of Psychometricians, on Effectiveness of Psychometric Testing on Teachers)

ANALYSIS:

As teachers in the contemporary educational system is faced with a wide variety of situational challenges, pertaining student's individual differences, technological advancements as well as highly vibrant curriculum, it thereby becomes a pertinent expectation from a teacher to be the sole panacea for every minor or major hindrance. On minute examination, it is evident that teachers are very much a part of the „constantly evolving educational system“, in this stance, it will be invalid to consider a teacher as a panacea. The major argument forwarded in the present paper is that teachers are to be identified as an asset that can be worked upon for his/her personal and professional betterment. It is further to be stated that psychometric testing can pose an efficient opportunity for teachers to be able to identify and generate fruitful outcomes. Although it is to be understood that a

well-established personality can't be expected to undergo transformation of a major kind, but a few areas that the assessee realises to be modified, can be worked on. For the current study, purposive sampling led to identification of 18 psychometricians, 11 of whom are license holder from RCI. this kind of a sample was considered to be an ideal one for the administration of the self-prepared questionnaire to derive results on the objectives of the study. Content analysis methodology along with yes/no likert analysis was carried on the collected data which has been presented in the following section.

The first objective of the test was to identify the possible advantages and disadvantages of psychometric testing on teachers, as stated by the respondents (see table 1). Psychometric testing has been reported to have significant advantages in

terms of administration on teachers. These advantages are, for instance they are helpful in identification of skills that are required to be a good teacher. Such tests can also be useful for pointing areas of improvement, although it is reiterated that like any other human being, a teacher also has a well-defined identity and personality which is the result of their genetic and environmental influences. Therefore, a complete change within their personalities should not be expected. Psychometric testing also leaves no space for socially desirable responses, if administered properly. Hence, they can efficiently and produce an absolute reflection of what the respondent is, "in real". This kind of testing can also help in making teachers self-aware, assessment of their social and emotional quotients respectively, along with identification of specific qualities like empathy. Unhealthy habits which may adversely affect their role of a teacher, like anger, frustration, can also be identified and eliminated.

As a part of the first objective itself, respondents were also asked to identify the limitations associated with psychometric administration on teachers, which include their high costs on purchase and conduction, along with a lot of time involved in the process. There is also a considerable paucity of skilled and expert professionals for administration and generation of results. Unskilled administrators lead to psychological conflict as they might not disseminate the results properly. If not fed back properly, they may lead to anxiety or depressive symptoms. Often psychometric results are misused by management for replacement or creation of vacancy, which is a major disadvantage. This kind of implication creates unnecessary competitive ambience among teachers, which is not a healthy indicator for an educational setup. Psychometry also calls for a follow up should be undertaken in course of 2-3 years, to expand their effectiveness. A major drawback is the unavailability of culture fair tests might lead to coloured results. Renowned psychologist Mary Lawson of McGill University, who is also an expert in the field, has identified the same flaw in psychometric testing, as a major one. According to him, the validity of most personality tests doesn't has a universal validity.

The second objective of the study was to indicate the specific (human) attributes that can be efficiently identified in teacher, by using psychometric tests. Psychometricians stated that the following attributed to be possessed by teachers, can be best identified by administration of psychological testing:

- **Aptitude:** Underlying ability of an individual to acquire a skill
- **Attitude:** A settled way of thinking or feeling about something
- **Personality:** A set of characteristic features in an individual's behaviour that remain stable over a period of time
- **Creativity:** Ability of an individual to generate novel ideas
- **Intelligence:** Global and aggregate capacity of an individual to think rationally, act purposefully and deal effectively with the environment
- **Social Quotient:** Ability of an individual to socialise for personal and professional benefits
- **Emotional Quotient:** Sensitive and carefully regulation and engagement with emotions of self and other people
- **Resilience:** Ability of an individual to bounce back in an adverse situation
- **Decision Making & Judgement:** Ability to analyse the situation and think of possible realistic outcomes that are beneficial
- **Rational/ Logical Approach:** Ability to think scientifically and avoiding personal biases or folk wisdom
- **Empathy:** Ability to think completely from the other person's perspective and feel the same way.
- **Active Listening:** A conscious and attentive listening in order to completely understand and comprehend what is being said.

For the identification of these attributes, numerous psychometric tools have been designed, and some of them have been indigenised to ensure validity and culture fairness. A few tests and batteries have been designed such that they can record more than one attribute or complementary attributes, which are efficient for acknowledging the skills and traits of the teachers. The third objective of the study was to identify the specific

Psychometric Tools that will be most efficient for assessing teachers, which were as follows: (arranged in accordance with preferences of the respondents):

- Mettl Aptitude Test for Teachers
- Differential aptitude test
- Draw-a-Man Test by Pramila Pathak

- Adaptation of Wechsler Adult Performance Intelligence Scale by R. Ramalingaswamy
- Test of General Mental Ability (Hindi) by M.C. Joshi.
- CIE Verbal Group Test of Intelligence by Uday Shankar
- Group Test of General Mental Ability by S. Jalota
- Group Test of Intelligence by Prayag Mehta
- Indian Adaptation of Stanford-Binet Test (Third Edition) by S.K. Kulshrestha
- Rorschach inkblot test
- Wechsler's adult intelligence test
- Thematic apperception test – Uma Chaudhary's Indian adaptation
- Mental Measurement Handbook- Long and Mehta.

A few of these tests are group tests, which can viably deal with constraints associated with time and skilled psychometricians. Majority of them are aptitude, personality and intelligence tests which are largely fixed attributed of human beings but in contemporary researches these attributes are identified to be relatively unstable in accordance with manipulations fostered by situational demands and experiential learning.

The forth objective of the study was to simply examine the view of psychometricians, if teachers should be posed to psychometric examination or not. This was a yes/no response, wherein it has been observed that 15 out of 18 participants stated that „psychometric testing should be administered on teachers“, while 3 said „no“ in this context (see table 2). Attributions for the can be correlated with the advantages and limitations associated with the same (objective 1). Examiners possibly weighed advantages more than the limitations as it is a matter of expanding the benefits consequently to the students and society at large, for which disadvantages and challenges are worth facing, if the desired results are achieved.

Finally, it was aimed to identify strategies that will make psychometric results beneficial for teachers and educationists. These strategies have been deduced via content analysis and have been stated as follows:

- Results should be kept confidential.
- Feedback should be disseminated with caution.
- Emphasis should be laid on avoidance of „labeling or stigma“ caused due to assessment results.
- Results should not be used for comparison with colleagues.
- Feedback should comprise of strategies and methods to improve on the evident lacunas.
- Follow up should be administered at required intervals of time.
- Teachers should be trained in self-regulation techniques.

These strategies are essential to make the entire process of psychometric examination, a fruitful one and its benefits are likely to disseminate into the classrooms, within the teaching pedagogy and approaches of a teacher and in the role of a teacher as a counsellor; but even then a teacher will not become the universal remedy for every challenge. These measures, in the longer run will also consequently sideline the relative limitations associated with psychological testing on teachers.

One of the most renowned psychometricians in the city, Mr. Rippan Sippy (practicing psychometrician and speech therapist at BLK hospital), was asked if teachers should also be trained in psychometric administration on students, and how effective it will be. According to him, a complete training of psychometric for teachers is not possible, as it takes a great time and effort in order to understand clinical disorders and of psychometric tools, which not all teachers will be able to acquire. This is an unrealistic expectation from teachers as they are eventual masters in their disciplines, they are not psychologists or to be precise clinical psychologists. But yes, they must have a basic understanding of disorders, especially childhood and developmental disorders so that if they identify such symptoms in a student, they can refer the student for further diagnosis.

CONCLUSION:

Teaching profession entails not only teaching but also an experience of lifetime learning within the variety of times and spaces that teachers are posed with. The present study primarily proposes that teacher who is an integral determinant of

the success of the education system should not be considered to be a panacea. This agent of teaching and learning process should rather be considered as an essential entity that is forever learning and growing as experience adds onto one's teaching career. Psychometric examination is further proposed to be an efficient assessment of a teacher's skills and attributes that can be enhanced for expansion of benefits generated by the teacher, not only in the classroom, but to the educational system at large. In this study, psychometric testing on teachers was studied in terms of their respective advantages and limitations. A few psychometric tests were also identified by the psychometricians who were the sample, for data collection, along with recognition of strategies that will make the psychometric results highly beneficial for teachers and educationists. Practice of such strategies is hence proposed to be a kind of remedy to counter the limitations associated with psychometric testing of teachers.

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